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## INPUT DEVICES

By: Your Name

There are many ways of **entering** information into a computer. Devices that allow users to enter information into the computer are referred to as *input devices*. An input device used frequently is called a keyboard.

### The Keyboard

Nearly every computer you see will have a keyboard. Most computer keyboards have plastic keys similar to those on a **standard typewriter**. Some, however, have what are called *membrane keys*. Membrane keys look as if they were printed on a flat surface. Unlike regular keys, they don't have to be pushed; they merely have to be touched.

Most computer keyboards have more keys than typewriter keyboards. Some have many more. These extra keys are three basic kinds.

Function keys. A function key on a typewriter is any key that does not produce a letter, number, or special symbol. On an electric typewriter, the tab key, return key and shift key are all function keys. They make it possible to arrange letters, numbers and other symbols on paper in an orderly way.



Most computers have **function keys** too, but many of these keys operate differently from those on a typewriter.

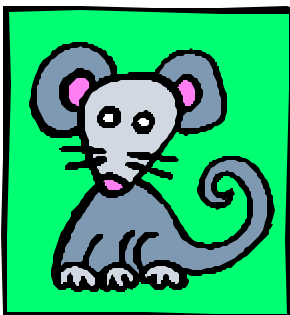
Many computers have a reset key to tell the computer to forget the current program and to start over. On many machines the dear key tells it to take the displayed text or graphics off the screen. When using any computer, you have to learn what its function keys do.

Numeric keypad. On some computers a numeric keypad is located off to one side of the basic cluster of keys. It looks very much like the keys on a **pocket calculator**. And no wonder--it serves the same purpose: to input numbers for the computer to use in calculations.

Locate keys. The purpose of locate keys is to enable the user to move quickly from point to point on the display screen. On many computers the locate keys are four keys with arrows. One arrow points up, one down, one right, and one left. Computer users call these directions "**north**," "**south**," "**east**," and "**west**," respectively.

## Mouse

Another input device is the mouse, popularized by its inclusion as standard equipment with the Apple Macintosh. With the rise in popularity of graphical user interfaces



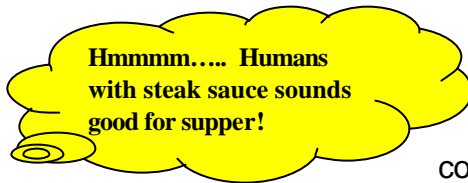
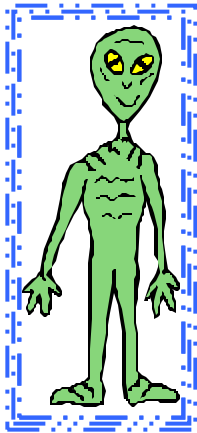
in MS-DOS; UNIX, and OS/2, use of mice is growing throughout the personal computer and workstation worlds. The basic features of a mouse are a casing with a flat bottom, designed to be gripped by one hand; one or more buttons on the top; a multidirectional detection device (usually a ball) on the bottom; and a cable

connecting the mouse to the computer. By moving the mouse on a surface (such as a desk), the user typically controls an on-screen cursor. A mouse is a relative pointing device

because there are no defined limits to the mouse's movement and because its placement on a surface does not map directly to a specific screen location. To select items or choose commands on the screen, the user presses one of the mouse's buttons, producing a "mouse click."

## Voice

We have all watched the TV show "Star Trek" at one point in our lives, and watched how they interact with their computer simply by talking to it. In the past, this seemed very far-fetched.



Today however, it is not. While we are not able to simply give voice commands to the computers we are sitting

at right now, there are various software packages that are available that will let you speak into a microphone and have the computer convert your speech into documents in programs such as Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. It is highly possible that in the future we won't even have to speak to the computer, we will simply "think" to the computer to have it do what we want.

Taken from The Computer Encyclopedia, Warren, Mike. Houghton Mifflin: Boston, 1994, p. 254.

Search words: Machine, Mouse, Alien

?? Machine border: Color – Pink, Dashed – Top choice, Style – 3pt Double line, Weight – 3pt.

?? Mouse border: There is no border on this one.

?? Alien border: Color – Light Blue, Dashed – Bottom choice, Style – 6pt Triple line, Weight – 6pt.

?? Alien text: Use the auto shape feature and type the included text, set it to "Tight."  
Set background to yellow. Text is Times News Roman 10, Bold.